

russellii venom. Two cobra bites during the 14 year period were treated successfully.

Though we have no additional data, such as how many snake-bite victims in the area did not come to the doctor, it appears that *Echis carinatus* bites are fatal only in cases of exceptional envenomation and only after a matter of days after the bite (less than 2% of the 300 in this study). This points to death by complications of, rather than direct envenomation.

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ROMULUS WHITAKER

13. CAPTURE OF A WHALE SHARK *RHINEODON TYPUS* SMITH IN RATNAGIRI WATERS

On 11 May 1965, a large shark was landed at Mirkarwada, Ratnagiri. The fish was identified as *Rhineodon typus* Smith based on its characteristic colour pattern and three longitudinal ridges on either side of the mid-dorsal region. The fish was caught in 13 fathoms in nylon gill nets, and was towed ashore.

This is the first record of the species from Ratnagiri. Recording of the capture of the Whale shark *Rhineodon typus* off the coast of India has been considered as a matter of interest, as these large fish occur rather rarely. Prater (1941) reviewed the data of the occurrence of the species from Indian waters. Since then, there have been a few additions, Kulkarni (1948) from Bombay, Chacko & Mathew (1954) from Malabar coast, Kaikini *et al.* (1959) from Mangalore, and Gopalan (1962) from Veraval, Gujarat State. Silas & Rajagopalan (1963) who reported it from Tuticorin have suggested a proforma for collecting detailed information whenever records of the Whale sharks are made. Information on the lines suggested by them is given below. The measurements are in millimetres.

Total length.....	5180
Standard length.....	4000
Head length.....	1380
Girth of body.....	1000
Width of mouth.....	820
Vertical height of 1st dorsal.....	460
Vertical height of 2nd dorsal.....	230
Length of caudal along upper margin.....	1480

Snout to 1st dorsal.....	2380
Snout to 2nd dorsal.....	2380
Snout to pectoral.....	1120
Interspace between 1st & 2nd dorsal.....	560
Interspace between 2nd dorsal & caudal.....	460
Length of pectoral.....	920
Length of 1st dorsal.....	660
Length of 2nd dorsal.....	280
Diameter of orbit.....	40
Interorbital distance.....	900

The weight was about 900 kg. It was a male. Two sucker fishes (*Remora remora*) were collected from the pectoral fins of the fish. No external parasitic copepods were observed.

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14. FISHING METHODS FOR THE SPINY EEL *MASTOCSEMBELUS ARMATUS* IN MADHYA PRADESH

The Spiny Eel frequents very weedy waters and hides among the weeds or in holes and crevices on the bank during the day. The latter habit is used in catching the eel. At Bhopal, the method used is to dig a small outlet at the edge of the water and cover it with stones. After three to four days a triangular hand net is kept at the mouth of the outlet and the fish frightened into it by stamping on the stones covering the outlet. Another method is to drop into the water cow dung-filled gunny bags with a few holes in them. The eel is said to be attracted into the bag by the dung but is unable to escape owing to the dorsal spines becoming entangled. Pots with holes are also left in the water and removed after a few days, trapping the fish sheltering in them. In north Madhya Pradesh, hollow bamboos with the internode bored at one end are used in the same manner. The eel is also caught with hook & line using shrimps, earthworms and tadpoles as bait.